

Message Text

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SUBJ: EXCHANGE TALKS - 1977/79 PROGRAM

REF: 75 MOSCOW A-366

1. AT LUNCH HOSTED BY ALEKSANDR CHURLIN OF MFA CULTUREAL DIVISION, P&C OFFICERS WERE TREATED TO AN INFORMAL REVIEW OF SOVIET "PROBLEM AREAS" AS BOTH SIDES PREPARE THEIR PROPOSALS FOR 1977-79 ANNEX TO CULTURAL RELATIONS AGREEMENT. OGANESYAN OF CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESENT ALONG WITH AZAROV AND ARUTYUNOV OF MFA. AREAS OF EXPRESSED CONCERN INCLUDE FILM EXCHANGES, TRAVELING EXHIBITS, BOOK EXHIBITS AND DISTRIBUTION OF SOVIET LIFE AND AMERICA ILLUSTRATED. SOVIETS SAID THEY WOULD HAVE DIFFICULTY MEETING EARLIER PLANNED DEADLINE OF APRIL 1 FOR EXCHANGE OF DRAFTS.

2. ACTING CHIEF OF MFA CULTURAL DIVISION CHURLIN REPEATED OLD SOVIET COMPLAINTS ABOUT IMBALANCE IN NUMBERS OF FEATURE FILMS SHOWN IN TWO COUNTRIES AND ASKED WHETHER MPAA WAS PRIVATE ORGANIZATION. SOVIETS AGAIN ASSURED THAT IT WAS AND THAT NO OFFICIAL USG BODY EXISTS TO INTERCEDE IN WHAT MUST BE BASIC COMMERCIAL RELATIONSHIP. SUGGESTION AGAIN MADE THAT SOVIETS ARE INCREASING NUMBER FILM WEEKS AND FESTIVALS IN US TO EXPAND COMMERCIAL CONTACTS. IN THIS CONNECTION CHURLIN

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SAID WE WOULD SOON HAVE REPLY, "PROBABLY POSITIVE", TO EMBASSY

NOTE PROPOSING BICENTENNIAL FILM FESTIVAL.

3. SOVIETS WERE POINTED IN EXPRESSING THEIR "DIFFICULTY" WITH US SUGGESTION MADE AT DECEMBER ANNUAL REVIEW TALKS THAT 1977-79 ANNEX "ENABLE" EACH SIDE TO SHOW TRAVELING EXHIBITS IN "UP TO" 18 CITIES WITHIN THAT PERIOD. OGANESYAN SUPPORTED CHURLIN'S POINT, CITING SEVERAL FORTHCOMING US COMMERCIAL EXHIBITS, PREPARATIONS FOR OLYMPICS AND GENERAL SHORTAGE OF BOTH EXHIBIT AND ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES, WHICH WOULD MAKE IT DIFFICULT HANDLE 18 SHOWINGS. IN CITING "LIMITED NUMBER" OF SUITABLE SOVIET SITES WHERE EXHIBITS HAVE NOT BEEN SHOWN, CHURLIN STRESSED THAT SOVIETS AT THIS TIME DO NOT RPT DO NOT INTEND OPEN ANY CLOSED CITIES FOR US EXHIBITS. THAT US HAS DONE SO FOR SOVIET EXHIBIT "SCIENTIFIC SIBERIA" IS "YOUR" BUSINESS; OUR REGULATIONS ARE CLEAR." OGANESYAN SUGGESTED THAT EMBASSY CONSIDER SHOWING IN CITIES WITH POPULATION UNDER 750,000, IF THEY ARE REPUBLIC CAPITALS, I.E., ULAN-UDE AND DUSHANBE. EMBOFFS NOTED THAT US PROPOSAL ONLY CALLED FOR "UP TO" 18 SHOWINGS AND SHOULD NOT OBLIGATE EITHER SIDE TO SEND OR ACCEPT A SPECIFIC NUMBER. CHURLIN RESPONDED THAT SOVIET DRAFT WOULD "PROBABLY" SUGGEST "ABOUT NINE SHOWINGS " FOR 1977-79, THE SAME NUMBER AS FOR 1974-76, LEAVING CLEAR IMPLICATION THAT SOVIET PROPOSAL WOULD LIMIT US SHOWINGS TO THIS NUMBER AS MAXIMUM.

4. CHURLIN ALSO MENTIONED 1977 INTERNATIONAL BOOK EXHIBIT WHICH SOVIETS HOPE TO EXPAND INTO A MAJOR EVENT. HE REGRETTED LACK OF US PARTICIPATION AT 1975 EXHIBIT AND REQUESTED EMBASSY'S ADVICE IN RECRUITING MORE US PARTICIPANTS. (SEE 75 MOSCOW A-366, EMBASSY WILL FOLLOW-UPML

5. ON DISTRIBUTION SOVIET LIFE AND AMERICA ILLUSTRATED, CHURLIN REPEATED ARGUMENT HEARD AT ANNUAL REVIEW TALKS: SOVIET SIDE BEARING EXTRAORDINARY COSTS ACHIEVING DESIRED DISTRIBUTION SL, WHEREAS AI DISTRIBUTED FREE WITHOUT ADVERTISING EXPENSED BY SOYUZPECHAT, WHICH OPERATES THIS SERVICE AT CLOSE TO MARGIN. SINCE ANY EFFORT BRING SL TO 62,000 WOULD REQUIRE ADDED EXPENSE, SOVIETS MIGHT SUGGEST SOME EQUATION BETWEEN SOVIET AND AMERICAN DISTRIBUTION COSTS.

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